

Ulysses European Tour 2013

A group of the Shining Bikers, consisting of Brenda and Barry, Pete and Ilze, Pete and Mim, UncleFrank, and AndyC met up at the Pier Hotel in Harwich. An excellent venue close to the ferry. (John met us later in the Black Forest).



The excellent meal of fish and chips was perfect; then on to the night ferry from Harwich to the Hook and our very pleasant cabins. After a comfortable night's sleep we faced the long slog on very wet autobahns down to St Wendel where Gernot and Wally and Uwe and Silke live. We had the evening meal in England, a drink on the boat, breakfast of croissants in Belgium, lunch of soup in Holland and afternoon tea in Germany when we arrived in the late afternoon. Wally's Kafe und Kuchen was Wonderbar!

On our journey we experienced everything the weather could throw at us, and arrived dripping wet. We were cold and wet, wet and wet! We were very grateful for the drying facilities in Gernot's garage and around the fire. Our gear was bone dry for the next morning's drive. That evening we enjoyed the hospitality of various members of Ulysses Club.de and joined a Stammtisch (meet up) in their regular spot. We need such a place when we have more localised groups. We made the mistake of ordering grosse [hubertuschnitzel](#). One steak was enough and not two! The food and drink was excellent and plenty.



It was still drizzling as we set off through the mist in convoy to the Black Forest and gave a very pleasant ethereal feel to the ride down.



En route to the south Gernot's clutch cable snapped. While Gernot engaged in running repairs and we went on ahead alone. Barry, having dropped his Sat nav, then dropped his wife. He was concentrating on making sense of a map whilst stationary in front of a coach load of tourists! Fortunately I was able to roll over in the protective gear and was unhurt apart from my pride. Another group found problems en route after a French local ran his bike straight towards them, as according to a local by-law they had right of way! Watch the Priority signs in rural France!

We ventured onwards and upwards round various mountain sides with lively bends until we reached our destination at Aitern, near Shonau in the far South of Germany.



We were greeted by a local band playing traditional German music which set the atmosphere. It was lovely to meet up with so many Ulysseans we had met on previous years in England Scotland and Germany. This year a large group of newly formed Swiss Ulysseans joined us club and a couple of Australians called in. A prototype group of three French Ulysseans came, including allthegear John.

I loved the day first day's ride as although we had yet another little accident, diverting us to a lovely village to find a garage, we had a leisurely day in the sunshine. We appreciated all the help we got from Uwe getting the bike fixed and taking us on a detour to Castle Bressau on the Rhine.

The rest of the group were guided by the Swiss and went through lots of traffic in Basel, but were eventually rewarded with wonderful views of the Swiss Alps.



After another night of celebrations, speeches and pictures, the 'boys' did an all action ride lead by Gernot. Barry describes it as 'one of the best riding days he has ever had.' I think they went at speed round lots of hair pin bends in wonderful scenery without luggage and Pillion passengers! I had a lovely day in a health Spa in Bad Krozingen near Freiberg. Many thanks for Joette and Silke for such a lovely day. Aquarobix and thermal baths and a nice lunch was wonderful for the muscles after our long trip.

At the International meet 2013, around a German national holiday, altogether there were about 25 Germans, 13 Swiss, 10 from GB and 2 from France. They had been accommodated in hotels in groups around the valley. After a brilliant weekend and the feeling of friendship we bid farewell to our extended family. Very many thanks to those who organised it as we know that it's hard work. We came away with many new friends and plans to meet up for the future. We hoped that by next year we would also be part of Ulysses club GB and able to have our own banner.



I can't wait for next year and maybe the return visit of other European friends.

Mrs Vanamonde